



NEWS RELEASE

September 10, 2002

New Helicopter Added to Yuma Border Patrol Fleet

A-Star gives the Yuma Sector a premier flying machine

Yuma Border Patrol officials announced the addition of a new helicopter for the Sector Air Operations Unit. The helicopter, an AS 350 B3, familiarly called the A-Star, will give the Yuma pilots additional aviation capabilities. The helicopter is the high performance version of the single engine range class. Powered by a Turbomeca Arriel 2B turbine engine, it is equipped with the FADEC System (Full Authority Digital Engine Control). It is totally suited for operations in conditions such as mountainous areas or extremely hot desert areas, and has the durability for very demanding missions.

The A-Star, manufactured by Eurocopter of France, is capable of carrying six people at one time, including the pilot and co-pilot. The additional seating capacity will greatly assist agents with evacuation during medical emergencies and give agents rapid deployment capability of special units. Along with the additional seating capacity, the A-Star can haul 2000 pounds on it's cargo hook which is important when transporting (slinging) vehicles or equipment into strategic areas. The evacuation, rapid deployment and cargo transport capabilities are essential elements in the Border Patrol enforcement mission and the Border Safety Initiative.

The A-Star's top speed is 155 knots, faster than any helicopters currently in the fleet. The Arriel 2B engine has 847 shaft horsepower and a rotor speed of 390 rpm. The fuel capacity is 143 U.S. gallons.

The A-Star is also equipped with an SX-5 Night Illumination system, a "FLIR" 7500 Ultra Forward Looking Infrared Imaging system with Telemedia projection. The night illumination and night vision equipment give the Border Patrol Pilots outstanding ability to work effectively during the evening hours. The equipment on the A-Star surpasses any equipment currently used in the helicopter fleet.

The A-Star offers operators the highest performance in its category with enhanced safety and a reduced pilot workload thanks to the FADEC system. Four pilots from the Yuma Sector have been trained to fly the A-Star. The A-Star will be a welcome addition to the air operations fleet.

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